

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for managing databases, the method comprising the steps of:  
registering a plurality of databases at a community server;  
wherein each database of said plurality of databases is controlled by a different  
party of a plurality of parties;  
wherein the community server is accessible over a first network to which one or  
more users from each party of said pluralities have access;  
wherein each database of said plurality of databases is installed on a different  
network than said first network;  
receiving from a user, at the community server, over said first network, a request to  
perform a management operation relating to a particular database of said  
plurality of databases that is controlled by a particular party of said  
plurality of parties;  
determining that the particular database is registered with said community server;  
determining whether the user is authorized to perform said management operation  
relating to said particular database; and  
if said user is authorized to perform said management operation relating to said  
first database, then the community server causing said management  
operation to be performed.
2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the first network is a public network.
3. The method of Claim 2 wherein the public network is the Internet.

- 1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein:  
2 the particular database is on a database appliance comprising a database process  
3 and a special purpose operating system whose features and configuration  
4 are dictated by the database process and supporting program components;  
5 and  
6 the step of performing the management operation includes adjusting an operational  
7 parameter of said database appliance.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of sending to the particular  
2 database from the community server an update for a database process that manages access  
3 to the particular database.
- 1 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing directory services  
2 by the community server for the particular database.
- 1 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing backup services  
2 by the community server for the particular database.
- 1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein:  
2 the method further comprises the step of the community server receiving from said  
3 particular database status information about said particular database; and  
4 the step of causing said management operation to be performed is performed by  
5 the community server providing at least a portion of said status information  
6 to said user.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the particular party is a database service provider  
 2 for a plurality of users on a public network, the database service provider having a  
 3 database managing platform and a set of one or more databases.

1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein  
 2 the method further comprises the step of receiving, at the community server, data  
 3 indicating authorized users and privileged requests related to the particular  
 4 database; and  
 5 the step of determining whether the user is authorized to perform said management  
 6 operation relating to said particular database includes determining that the  
 7 user is not authorized if any of the following is true:  
 8 the user is not one of the authorized users, and  
 9 the request is not one of the privileged requests associated with the user.

1 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving from the plurality of parties,  
 2 at the community server, periodic requests for data indicating available new program  
 3 versions of software associated with said plurality of databases.

1 12. The method of claim 11, further comprising, if at least one available new program  
 2 version is indicated, then downloading the available new program version for use by the  
 3 plurality of parties.

1 13. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of receiving status information includes  
 2 receiving data indicative of at least one of current database status and current database  
 3 usage.

1 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of causing the management operation to  
2 be performed includes at least one of adding an authorized user and deleting an authorized  
3 user for said particular database.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of causing the management operation to  
2 be performed includes changing a privileged request associated with an authorized user.

1 16. The method of claim 1, the step of causing the management operation to be  
2 performed includes changing a license term for using software licensed through the  
3 community server.

1 17. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of causing the management operation to be  
2 performed includes changing database resources a user may access.

1 18. The method of claim 17, wherein the particular database resources includes data  
2 storage space on the particular database.

1 19. A method for managing a database, the method comprising the steps of:  
2 registering a first database at a community server;  
3 wherein the database is controlled by a first party and the community server is  
4 controlled by a second party different from said first party;  
5 wherein the first database is on a first network controlled by the first party;  
6 wherein the community server is accessible over a second network that is not  
7 controlled by said first party;

8 wherein one or more users from said first party have access to said second  
9 network;  
10 receiving from a user, at the community server, over said second network, a  
11 request to perform a management operation relating to the first database;  
12 determining that the first database is registered with said community server;  
13 determining whether the user is authorized to perform said management operation  
14 relating to said first database; and  
15 if said user is authorized to perform said management operation relating to said  
16 first database, then the community server causing said management  
17 operation to be performed.

1 20. The method of Claim 19 wherein the second network is a public network.

1 21. The method of Claim 20 wherein the public network is the Internet.

1 22. The method of claim 19, wherein:  
2 the first database is on a database appliance comprising a database process and a  
3 special purpose operating system whose features and configuration are  
4 dictated by the database process and supporting program components; and  
5 the step of performing the management operation includes adjusting an operational  
6 parameter of said database appliance.

1 23. The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of sending to the first database  
2 from the community server an update for a database process that manages access to the  
3 first database.

1 24. The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of providing directory  
2 services by the community server for the first database.

1 25. The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of providing backup services  
2 by the community server for the first database.

1 26. The method of claim 19, wherein:  
2 the method further comprises the step of the community server receiving from said  
3 first database status information about said first database; and  
4 the step of causing said management operation to be performed is performed by  
5 the community server providing at least a portion of said status information  
6 to said user.

1 27. The method of claim 19, wherein the first party is a database service provider for a  
2 plurality of users on a public network, the database service provider having a database  
3 managing platform and a set of one or more databases.

1 28. The method of claim 19, wherein  
2 the method further comprises the step of receiving, at the community server, data  
3 indicating authorized users and privileged requests related to the first  
4 database; and  
5 the step of determining whether the user is authorized to perform said management  
6 operation relating to said first database includes determining that the user in  
7 not authorized if any of the following is true:  
8 the user is not one of the authorized users, and

9 the request is not one of the privileged requests associated with the user.

1 29. The method of claim 19, further comprising receiving from the first party, at the  
2 community server, periodic requests for data indicating available new program versions of  
3 software associated with said first database.

1 30. The method of claim 29, further comprising, if at least one available new program  
2 version is indicated, then downloading the available new program version for use by the  
3 first party.

1 31. The method of claim 26, wherein the step of receiving status information includes  
2 receiving data indicative of at least one of current database status and current database  
3 usage.

1 32. The method of claim 19, wherein the step of causing the management operation to  
2 be performed includes at least one of adding an authorized user and deleting an authorized  
3 user for said first database.

1 33. The method of claim 19, wherein the step of causing the management operation to  
2 be performed includes changing a privileged request associated with an authorized user.

1 34. The method of claim 19, the step of causing the management operation to be  
2 performed includes changing a license term for using software licensed through the  
3 community server.

1 35. The method of claim 19 wherein the step of causing the management operation to  
2 be performed includes changing database resources a user may access.

1 36. The method of claim 35, wherein the first database resources includes data storage  
2 space on the first database.

1 37. A computer-readable medium carrying instructions for managing databases, the  
2 computer-readable medium comprising instructions for causing one or more processors to  
3 perform the steps of:  
4 registering a plurality of databases at a community server;  
5 wherein each database of said plurality of databases is controlled by a different  
6 party of a plurality of parties;  
7 wherein the community server is accessible over a first network to which one or  
8 more users from each party of said pluralities have access;  
9 wherein each database of said plurality of databases is installed on a different  
10 network of a plurality of networks than the other databases of said plurality  
11 of databases;  
12 receiving from a user, at the community server, over said first network, a request to  
13 perform a management operation relating to a particular database of said  
14 plurality of databases that is controlled by a particular party of said  
15 plurality of parties;  
16 determining that the particular database is registered with said community server;  
17 determining whether the user is authorized to perform said management operation  
18 relating to said particular database; and



19 if said user is authorized to perform said management operation relating to said  
20 first database, then the community server causing said management  
21 operation to be performed.

1 38. The computer-readable medium of Claim 37 wherein the first network is a public  
2 network.

1 39. The computer-readable medium of Claim 38 wherein the public network is the  
2 Internet.

1 40. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein:  
2 the particular database is on a database appliance comprising a database process  
3 and a special purpose operating system whose features and configuration  
4 are dictated by the database process and supporting program components;  
5 and  
6 the step of performing the management operation includes adjusting an operational  
7 parameter of said database appliance.

1 41. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, further including instructions for  
2 performing the step of sending to the particular database from the community server an  
3 update for a database process that manages access to the particular database.

1 42. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, further including instructions for  
2 performing the step of providing directory services by the community server for the  
3 particular database.

1 43. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, further including instructions for  
 2 performing the step of providing backup services by the community server for the  
 3 particular database.

1 44. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein:  
 2 the computer-readable medium further comprises instructions for performing the  
 3 step of the community server receiving from said particular database status  
 4 information about said particular database; and  
 5 the step of causing said management operation to be performed is performed by  
 6 the community server providing at least a portion of said status information  
 7 to said user.

1 45. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the particular party is a  
 2 database service provider for a plurality of users on a public network, the database service  
 3 provider having a database managing platform and a set of one or more databases.

1 46. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein  
 2 the computer-readable medium further comprises instructions for performing the  
 3 step of receiving, at the community server, data indicating authorized users  
 4 and privileged requests related to the particular database; and  
 5 the step of determining whether the user is authorized to perform said management  
 6 operation relating to said particular database includes determining that the  
 7 user is not authorized if any of the following is true:  
 8 the user is not one of the authorized users, and

9 the request is not one of the privileged requests associated with the user.

1 47. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, further comprising instructions for  
 2 performing the step of receiving from the plurality of parties, at the community server,  
 3 periodic requests for data indicating available new program versions of software  
 4 associated with said plurality of databases.

1 48. The computer-readable medium of claim 47, further comprising instructions for  
 2 performing the step of, if at least one available new program version is indicated, then  
 3 downloading the available new program version for use by the plurality of parties.

1 49. The computer-readable medium of claim 44, wherein the step of receiving status  
 2 information includes receiving data indicative of at least one of current database status and  
 3 current database usage.

1 50. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the step of causing the  
 2 management operation to be performed includes at least one of adding an authorized user  
 3 and deleting an authorized user for said particular database.

1 51. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the step of causing the  
 2 management operation to be performed includes changing a privileged request associated  
 3 with an authorized user.

1 52. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the step of causing the  
 2 management operation to be performed includes changing a license term for using  
 3 software licensed through the community server.

53. The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein the step of causing the management operation to be performed includes changing database resources a user may access.

54. The computer-readable medium of claim 53, wherein the particular database resources includes data storage space on the particular database.

55. A computer-readable medium carrying instructions for managing a database, the instructions including instructions for performing the steps of:

- registering a first database at a community server;
- wherein the database is controlled by a first party and the community server is controlled by a second party different from said first party;
- wherein the first database is on a first network controlled by the first party;
- wherein the community server is accessible over a second network that is not controlled by said first party;
- wherein one or more users from said first party have access to said second network;
- receiving from a user, at the community server, over said second network, a request to perform a management operation relating to the first database;
- determining that the first database is registered with said community server;
- determining whether the user is authorized to perform said management operation relating to said first database; and

16 if said user is authorized to perform said management operation relating to said  
 17 first database, then the community server causing said management  
 18 operation to be performed.

1 56. The computer-readable medium of Claim 55 wherein the second network is a  
 2 public network.

1 57. The computer-readable medium of Claim 56 wherein the public network is the  
 2 Internet.

1 58. The computer-readable medium of claim 55, wherein:  
 2 the first database is on a database appliance comprising a database process and a  
 3 special purpose operating system whose features and configuration are  
 4 dictated by the database process and supporting program components; and  
 5 the step of performing the management operation includes adjusting an operational  
 6 parameter of said database appliance.

1 59. The computer-readable medium of claim 55, further including instructions for  
 2 performing the step of sending to the first database from the community server an update  
 3 for a database process that manages access to the first database.

1 60. The computer-readable medium of claim 55, further including instructions for  
 2 performing the step of providing directory services by the community server for the first  
 3 database.

1 61. The computer-readable medium of claim 55, further including instructions for  
2 performing the step of providing backup services by the community server for the first  
3 database.

1 62. The computer-readable medium of claim 55, wherein:  
2 the computer-readable medium further comprises instructions for performing the  
3 step of the community server receiving from said first database status  
4 information about said first database; and  
5 the step of causing said management operation to be performed is performed by  
6 the community server providing at least a portion of said status information  
7 to said user.

1 63. The computer-readable medium of claim 55, wherein the first party is a database  
2 service provider for a plurality of users on a public network, the database service provider  
3 having a database managing platform and a set of one or more databases.

1 64. The computer-readable medium of claim 55, wherein  
2 the computer-readable medium further comprises instructions for performing the  
3 step of receiving, at the community server, data indicating authorized users  
4 and privileged requests related to the first database; and  
5 the step of determining whether the user is authorized to perform said management  
6 operation relating to said first database includes determining that the user in  
7 not authorized if any of the following is true:  
8 the user is not one of the authorized users, and



1 71. The computer-readable medium of claim 55 wherein the step of causing the  
2 management operation to be performed includes changing database resources a user may  
3 access.

1 72. The computer-readable medium of claim 71, wherein the first database resources  
2 includes data storage space on the first database.